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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4018
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 000012

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREF EAID IR SW
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED: SWEDEN OPPOSES OPPOSING IRAN
PRESIDENCY AT UNDP

REF: SECSTATE 1500

POL Counselor delivered reftel demarche on January 9 to Ambassador Robert Rydberg, MFA Deputy Director General (A/S equivalent) for Middle East and North Africa Affairs. Rydberg stated that Sweden has a general policy of supporting candidates for leadership positions in international organizations if they are "unanimously endorsed" by their regional group. POL Counselor repeated concerns about the impact of an Iranian presidency, including on UNDP credibility and the organization's ability to support gender equality and minority rights. Rydberg replied that if Iran were elected and if it did indeed act in a manner that displayed a bias on gender issues or minority rights, then "you can count on us to adamantly oppose" that behavior. But at this point, he added, Sweden would likely continue to be guided by its "firm, longstanding and principled" position of supporting candidates endorsed by their regional grouping.

SILVERMAN